

Dear Appropriation Committee Members,

On behalf of Connecticut's Even Start Director's Coalition, please consider the importance of removing major barriers including transportation and quality childcare when looking at the expansion for two generation programming for Connecticut's most in need and hardest to serve population. Our young parent and dual language learner students have repeatedly said they could not have completed our program if these much needed supports were not in place.

Our goal is to engage parents with children in the first 1,000 days of their life when numerous developmental milestones are achieved and early intervention has the greatest impact. Currently, at best, an infant/toddler slot can cost from \$10,000 to \$12,000 per year in a National Association for the Education of Young Children accredited center. In one program, recently, two children under the age of 2 have been referred to services for speech and occupational therapy. This intervention would not have happened if the teachers and parent educators were not actively involved with not only helping the parent but implementing the Ages & Stages with the child on a regular basis and developing a trusting relationship with the parent. This early identification and connection to needed supports earlier on in the child's life creates a positive fiscal note for the tax payers of Connecticut with eliminating potential future cost in special education programs and life-long needs.

In communities that do not have a robust public transportation system, busing is a must and in those that do, vouchers are necessary. For a program with 15+ students this could cost anywhere from 10,000-\$20,000 annually for the entire class.

Thank you for your consideration focusing on not only two generational academic supports for economic stability but the logistical supports that have proven success for Connecticut's Even Start programs.

Sincerely,

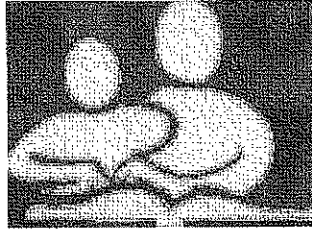


Donna Labbe

Director, Torrington Even Start

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## Even Start



A Family Learning Program

Dear Appropriations Committee Members,

My name is Doreen O'Brien and I am an Even Start teacher. Our program is facilitated through the Torrington Public School System. I work with two populations:

- English as a Second Language
- Teen Parents

With both groups, we focus on a variety of life and academic skills thus nurturing an openness to learning and eventually understanding and appreciating how knowledge empowers us and brings opportunities to us. I have witnessed how lack of education and poor decision making has negatively impacted our community and how inner generational learning can and does break these cycles.

Thank you

Doreen O'Brien

Even Start Teacher

Mi nombre es Maricela Perez  
yo le doy las gracias por los  
beneficio que nos brindan en  
Even start tengo 4 años de  
estar en el programa y estoy  
contenta porque gracias a sus  
apoyo estamos aprendiendo a  
desarrollar el idioma ingles  
el cual me esta sirviendo para  
ayudar a mis hijos en su labores  
escolares el cual mi hijos estan  
contento.  
gracias a todos ustedes y al  
programa Even Start

Even Start Student

My name is Maricela Perez. I just wanted to say thank you for all the benefits that I have received for being a part of Even Start. I have been in the Even Start program for almost 4 years now, and I am very happy for all the support. I have been able to learn and develop my English, which has helped me help my kids with their homework, and for that I am very grateful. Thank you for the Even Start.

Mi nombre es Laura Rangel  
del programa Even Start.

y Quiero darles las gracias por  
el apoyo que emos recibido  
de parte de ustedes, ya que este  
programa es una gran ayuda  
para nosotros los padres de familia  
que nos ayuda cada dia a poder aprender  
mas del idioma de este Pais como lo es  
el Ingles. ya que asi podemos tener  
una mejor comunicacion con nuestros  
hijos y poder ayudarlos con sus tareas  
de la escuela, para que ellos tengan  
una buena educacion. mi más profundo  
agradecimiento y esperamos seguir contando  
con su apoyo.

Even Start Student

My name is Maricela Perez. I just wanted to say thank you for all the benefits that I have received for being a part of Even Start. I have been in the Even Start program for almost 4 years now, and I am very happy for all the support. I have been able to learn and develop my English, which has helped me help my kids with their homework, and for that I am very grateful. Thank you for the Even Start.

Buenos Dias !

mi nombre es Julieta negrin sol.  
estudiante. quiero darle las gracias  
al Personal por apoyarnos  
en el Programa Eventos sta.  
la cual me siento agradecida de recibir  
su apoyo. muy cortezmente.

Atte Julieta negrin.

Even Start Student

Dear Appropriation Committee Members-

I appreciate the opportunity and privilege that we provide to evolve with our children educationally.

Lymarie Martinez  
Even Start Student